

# Matthew Sims

*Curriculum Vitae*

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## Areas of Interest

- AOS Philosophy of Mind and Cognitive Science, Philosophy of biology
- AOC Metaphysics, Epistemology, Philosophy of science

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## Education

2017– 2020 **PhD**, *University of Edinburgh*.  
(*anticipated*)

- Examination Committee: Professor Eva Jablonka (Hebrew University; London School of Economics); Dr Alistair Isaac (University of Edinburgh): doctorate awarded with no corrections.
- Supervisors: Dr Dave Ward, Professor Andy Clark, and Dr Julian Kiverstein

2016 – 2017 **MSc**, Philosophy by research, *University of Edinburgh*: graduated with distinction.

2012 – 2016 **BA**, Honours in philosophy *University of London, Birkbeck College*: graduated with first-class honours.

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## Visiting Positions

2018 **RA**, *Institute of Cognitive Sciences and Technologies (Rome)*

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## Research

### Publications

2021 “Is Free energy minimization the mark of the cognitive?” (K. Kiverstein & M. Sims) *Biology & Philosophy* (forthcoming).

2020 “How to count biological minds: symbiosis, the Free-energy Principle, and reciprocal multiscale integration”, *Synthese*. doi.org/[10.1007/s11229-020-02876-w](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11229-020-02876-w)

- 2019 “Minimal-Perception: Responding to the Challenges of Perceptual Constancy and Veridicality with Plants”, *Philosophical Psychology*. [doi.org/10.1080/09515089.2019.1646898](https://doi.org/10.1080/09515089.2019.1646898)
- 2019 “Coupling to variant information: an ecological account of comparative mental imagery generation”, *Review of Philosophy and Psychology*. [doi.org/10.1007/s13164-019-00454-9](https://doi.org/10.1007/s13164-019-00454-9)

### Completed Manuscripts (drafts available by request)

- “A Continuum of Intentionality: linking the biogenic and anthropogenic approaches to cognition (under review)
- “Ecological in Spirit: Predictive Processing and the Limits of Direct Perception” (under review)
- “Modelling ourselves: what the debate on the Free Energy Principle reveals about our implicit notions of representation” (G. Pezzulo & M. Sims) (under review)

### Work in Preparation

- “Major Transitions in Active Inference” (co-authored with Beren Millidge)
- “Coordination and Cooperation: collective agency in social microbes”

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### Additional Training

- 2019 – 2020 UK Higher Education Academy fellow training, *University of Edinburgh*.
- 2018 – 2021 PPLS Tutor training, *University of Edinburgh*.
- 2019 Microbiota, Symbiosis and Individuality summer school, *ERC IDEM*.
- 2018 Extended Cognition in the Classroom workshop, *University of Edinburgh*.
- 2018 Data Carpentry workshop: R programming and visualisation with R, *University of Edinburgh*.
- 2017 Workshop on Naturalism in Philosophy of Perception, *University of York*
- 2017 Research Methods and Statistics 1 (course audit), *University of Edinburgh*.
- 2014 Winter School of Ethics and Neuroscience, *Humboldt University & Berlin School of Mind and Brain*.

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### Service and Professional Activities

**Journal Referee:** *Synthese; Biology & Philosophy*

### Conference and Event Organization

- 2019 **New Enlightenment Lecture**, *University of Edinburgh*: event organizer.
- 2019 **Timescales of Life and Mind conference**, *University of Edinburgh*: lead conference organizer, reviewer, moderator and chair.
- 2019 **Timescales of Life and Mind workshop**, *University of Edinburgh*: lead workshop organizer and moderator.
- 2018 **Models of the Mind**, *University of Edinburgh*: served as reviewer and commenter.
- 2018 **The Open Sessions of the Aristotelian Society**, *Oxford University*: served as chair.
- 2018 **Symposium of Affordances**, *The Institute of Cognitive Sciences and Technologies*: served as commenter.

### Paper Presentations \*(invited)

- \*2020 Minimal Systems, Agency, and Intelligence, *University of Wollongong*
- "Escaping the Grip of Folk Biology: the sensorimotor coordination criterion of cognition and a case of motility symbiosis"
- \*2019 XSPECT workshop, *Sussex University*
- "Symbiotic Mind: a case for bio-cognitive pluralism"
- 2019 Postgrad Research Group Share, *University of Edinburgh*
- "Symbiotic Mind: a case for bio-cognitive pluralism"
- 2019 Microbiota, Symbiosis and Individuality ERC IDEM summer school
- "Biological Foundations of Cognition and Predictive Processing"
- 2018 The Open Sessions of the Aristotelian Society, *Oxford University*
- "Dissolving the Problem of Visual Mental Imagery for an Enactive Account of Predictive Processing"

### Other Activities

- 2019 – present **Undergraduate Student Mentor**, *University of Edinburgh*  
Cognitive science BA dissertation assistance for student Arturo Loiselle

### Reading Group Organization

- 2019 – present Active Inference and Free Energy Principle Reading Group, *University of Edinburgh*
- 2016 – 2017 Philosophy of Cognitive Science Reading Group, *University of Edinburgh*

### Administrative

- 2019 – present Philosophy, Psychology, and Informatics Group (PPIG), social media moderator, *University of Edinburgh*

### **Affiliations**

- The Aristotelian Society
- The Edinburgh Women in Philosophy Group
- Edinburgh Cognitive Science Society
- Edinburgh Active Mind Lab

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### **Studentships and Grants awarded**

#### **Conference Grants**

- 2019 University of Edinburgh Training and Development Fund: £2880
- 2019 Scots Philosophical Association: £1500
- 2019 EIDYN: £250
- 2019 Aristotelian Society: £250
- 2019 PPLS School of Philosophy: £200

#### **Studentships and Other Grants**

- 2019 European Research Council + Immunity Development and Microbiota £209
- 2018 Edinburgh University Erasmus + Traineeship Grant: £848
- 2018 Edinburgh Research Support Grant: £376

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### **Teaching**

#### **Experience as a Teaching Assistant**

- 2020 – present **Phil08004 – Logic**, lecturer: Dr Brian Rabern, *University of Edinburgh*.
- 2020 – 2021 **Phil08014 – Mind, Matter and Language**, lecturer: Dr Wolfgang Schwarz, *University of Edinburgh*.
- 2019 – 2020 **Phil08005 - Philosophy of Science 1**, lecturers: Dr Alistair Isaac & Joe Wolf, *University of Edinburgh*.
- 2018 – 2019 **Phil08017 - Knowledge and Reality**, lecturer: Dr Bryan Pickel, *University of Edinburgh*.

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### **Awards**

2018- 2019     Edinburgh Teaching Award - nominee

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### **Other Skills**

- Programming: R, Word, Excel, MouseTracker (kinaesthetic recording and analysis software), Pro Tools (audio recording software), Final Cut Pro (video editing software)
- Languages: English (native), German (intermediate level proficiency in speaking, reading, and writing)

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### **Letters of Recommendation (available by request)**

Dr Dave Ward: [dave.ward@ed.ac.uk](mailto:dave.ward@ed.ac.uk)

Professor Andy Clark: [andy.clark@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:andy.clark@sussex.ac.uk)

Dr Julian Kiverstein: [j.d.kiverstein@amsterdamumc.nl](mailto:j.d.kiverstein@amsterdamumc.nl)

Dr Giovanni Pezzulo: [giovanni.pezzulo@istc.cnr.it](mailto:giovanni.pezzulo@istc.cnr.it)

Dr Bryan Pickel: [bryan.pickel@ed.ac.uk](mailto:bryan.pickel@ed.ac.uk) (tutor letter)

Dr Alistair Isaac: [a.m.c.isaac@ed.ac.uk](mailto:a.m.c.isaac@ed.ac.uk) (tutor letter)